

THE

Three Grand Queries

Resolved.

Shewing the great Iniquity and Injustice in any one Prince, that attempts by *War, Blood and Rapine*, To be Sole *Lord Paramount*, and *Universal Monarch* over all other Kings, Free Princes, and States.

By a Gentleman Learned in Divinity, Law and History.

SIR,

UPON a Serious, and Considerate perusal of your Questions, you lately sent me, I have returned to each of them a Solution, according to the Sentiments of very Learned and Judicious Authors; to which I doubt not but you will be pleased to make a Favourable Reception; And the rather, for that this my Performance is grounded upon your Earnest Intreaty. The Design of your Queries (if I mistake not) is the same of my Answers (*viz.*) To demonstrate to the World, That it is a Great and most detestable Wickedness in any one Sovereign Potentate, to Strive, and Wrestle, by Powerful Armies, to seat himself in the Throne of General Supremacy, and Dominion over all other Christian Kings, free Princes, and States. O Sir! The Kings of Old, had no such ambitious Designs lodged in their Breasts; no such predominant Desires of Conquests, to bring mankind into *Universal Slavery*; if we may believe *Justin*, who in the very Beginning of his History writes thus: *The Sway, and Rule of Nations at the First, was in the Hands of Kings, who got their Height of Majesty not by Popular Ambition, but by their moderate Carriage, well approved by honest and good Men. Their Care was not in the Keeping, and not the Augmenting of their Dominions limits. Every Kings Kingdom was bounded within his own Country.* Sir, I shall no longer detain you from the Reading my Answers to your Queries, both which are humbly

1. Qu. *Whether any Person, that is Endued with God's admired Gifts, Piety, and Honesty, can Esteem it as a part of his Felicity to Possess an Empire by no means but by War?*

Ans. Saint *Augustin*, that Sharp-witted Father, for a Resolution of this Question, frames a Comparison of poor Quiet, and Rich Trouble: Let us (saith he) take two men [for every particular Man, is a part of the greatest City, and Kingdom of the World, as a Letter is a part of a Word,] and of these two men, let us imagine one to be Poor, or but of a mean Estate, the other Potent, and Wealthy: But withal, let my Wealthy man take along with him, namely, Fears, Sorrows, Covetise, Suspect, Disquiet, Contentions, let these be the Hooks for him to ball in the Augmentation of his Estate: And withal the increase of those Cares together with his Estate; And let my poor man take with him Sufficiency with little, Love of Kindred, Neighbours, Friends, Joyous Peace, peaceful Religion, Soundness of Body, Sincereness of Heart, Abstinence of Diet, Chastity of Carriage, and Security of Conscience: Where should a man find any one so Sottish, as would make a doubt, which of these to prefer in his Choice? Well then, even as we have done with these two Men, so let us do with two Families, two Nations, or two Kingdoms: Lay them both to the Line of Equity: which done, and duly Considered, when it is done, here doth Vanity lie bare to the View, and there Shines Felicity; wherefore it is more Convenient, that such as Fear and follow the Law of God, should have the Swaying of such Empires: Not so much for themselves, as for those over whom they are Emperors; for themselves, their Piety, and their Honesty will suffice them, both to the Enjoying of true Felicity in this Life, and attaining of that Eternal, and true Felicity in the next. So that, hereupon Earth, the *Rule and Regality*, that is given to the Good Man, doth not return him so much good, as it doth to those that are under this his *Rule and Regality*. But Contrariwise, the Government of the Wicked harm themselves far more than their Subjects: For it giveth themselves the greater Liberty to Exercise their Lusts; but for their Subjects, they have none but their own Iniquities to answer for: For what Injury soever the Unrighteous Master doth to the Righteous Servant, it is no Scourge for his Guilt, but a tryal of his Virtue.

And therefore he that is good: (a) is free, tho' he be a Slave: And he that is Evil, a Slave, though he be a King; Nor is he Slave to one Man, but that which is worst of all, unto as many Masters, as he affecteth Vices. According to the Scripture, speaking thus hereof: *Of whatsoever a man is overcome, to that he is in bondage.* 2 Pet. 2. 19.

II. Qu. *Whether Kingdoms, Principalities, Seignories, or the like, acquired by Injustice, and Rapine, be accounted by all good Men, to be nothing else, but Thievish Purchases?*

Ans. Set Justice aside (says St. *Austin*) and what are Kingdoms but fair thievish Acquisitions, or Purchases? Because what are Thieves Purchases but little Kingdoms? For in Thefts, the Hands of the underlings are directed by the Commander, the Confederacy of them is Sworn together and Pillage is shared by the Law amongst them; And if those *Rogues* grow up to be able enough to keep Forts, build Habitations, Possess Cities, and Conquer adjoining Nations, then their Governments is no more called Thievish, but graced with the Eminent name of a Kingdom, given, and gotten, not because they have left their Practices, but because that now they use them without danger of Law: For Elegant and Excellent was *Diomedes* the Pirate's Answer to the Great *Macedonian Alexander*, who had taken him: The King asking him how he durst molest the Seas so, he replied with a free and bold Spirit, *How durst thou molest the whole World? But because I do it with a little Ship only, I am called a Thief; Thou doing it with a Great Navy, art call'd an Emperor.*

Lucan the Poet calls *Alexander* a happy Thief of Earth, and

*Terrarum fatale malum, fulmenq; quod omnes,
Percuteret Populos, pariterq; & Sydas iniquam.*

Gentibus — — — which have been Englished thus;

Earth's Fatal Mischief, and a Cloud of Thunder,

Rending the World: A Star that struck in sunder

The Nations — — —

Now if the Great *Macedonian* was look'd upon as a Disturber of the peace of the whole World, Why may not *Nimrod* the Son of *Cush*, and *Nim*, the Son of *Belus* that were both before him, be proclaimed Thieves, Pirates, and Usurpers of other Princes Rights? As for the former, *Moses* gives us an Account of him; That he began to be a mighty One in the Earth; he was a mighty Hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, even of *Nimrod* the Mighty Hunter before the Lord. Gen. 10 v. 8, 9: upon which *Learned Divines* of our own, have this remarkable Observation making.

(1.) *Began to be a Mighty One* (The same is said of *Nimrod*)

such as are most stubborn towards their Princes, and most violent in their Insurrections, &c. and of *Nimrod* the Mighty Hunter before the Lord. Gen. 10 v. 8, 9: upon which *Learned Divines* of our own, have this remarkable Observation making.

(2.) *A Mighty Hunter*] Both of Beasts, and of Men, for the one Hunting many times is a *Prælium*, or *Preparative* to the other; as *Aristotle*, Lib. 1. Polit. c. 8. But here his hunting of Men is principally meant, he was the first that after the Flood, set up an Absolute, Arbitrary, and Violent Domination over Men, pursuing them (who would not willingly come under his Command) with no more Respect, or Pity, than Hunters shew to Beasts, whom they hunt to Death; and therefore is Tyranny set forth by Hunting, Jer. 16. 16. &c.

(3.) *Before the Lord*] That is, tho' he were sometimes Crafty as well as Cruel, God set his Observant Eye upon all his Greedy and Bloody Plots, and Practices; so that none of them (how cunningly soever they were contrived) could escape his View: Or, he was a mighty Hunter before the Lord, that is, he was so desperately bold in his Boisterous and Violent Tyranny, that he was not afraid to act it before the Lord.

(4.) *VVherefore it is said*] His Cruelty and Tyranny was so notorious, that it became a Proverb of Reproach; as if one should say of another naughty Man of his Haughty Spirit, *He is a very Nimrod*; such a hunter as he was, &c. Thus much of *Nimrod*, the Son of *Cush*.

As for the Latter; namely *Ninus*; His Greedy and Bloody Practices are related by the Historiographer *Justin*: "*Ninus of Assyria*, was the first that followed the Lust of Sovereignty, in breaking the Old Hereditary Law of Nations. He first Warred on the adjoining Countries, Subduing the People (as yet unacquainted with Arts Military) - as far as *Libia*: And little after, saith he: *Ninus* confirmed his Conquests by continuing Possession of it. And having Subdued the Neighbouring Nations; from them he Levied stronger Powers, and set farther footing into the World, until by making one Victory the continual means of another, he had made an intire Conquest of all the *East*, &c. And the same *Justin* in another part of his History tells us, that *Vexores* the Egyptian King, and *Tanais* the Scythian, did first Invade the adjoining Nations for desire of Glory, and *Ninus* the first for desire of Universal Sovereignty and Domination.

Now for these three Pre-mentioned Kings, viz. *Alexander*, *Nimrod*, and *Ninus*, to War upon their Neighbours, and to proceed to the Hurt of such as hurted not them, for greedy Desire of Rule and Sovereignty, what was this but flat *Thievery* in a greater Excess and Quantity than ordinary?

But I cannot here pass by the Old Romans, for they were as guilty of Injustice, *Thievery*, and *Rapine* as any of them, that I mentioned before; And I have to prove it, the Testimony of the Antients, namely, *Cyprian*, *Minutius Felix*, *Arnobius*, *Hieron*, *Cyril*, *Lactantius*, and others; all of them with one Consent do speak of the great Injustice, that the Citizens of Rome offered to other Innocent Nations, to enlarge their Sovereignty, and Domination over the whole World; so that they always thought the best Right

Right to consist in their Arms, and that was the Roman Law. But in the Account of the Roman Laws, which are to be found than in the Martial Deeds of that People. *Causa Nullam aliam adferit, quam quod possideat, predantur.* D. He who being demanded, by what right he held any thing, could shew nothing but having got it, he would keep it, was held to be a Thief, a Pirate, or an Usurper of another Man's Right.

III. Qu. Whether a Good and Upright Man, ought to entertain any desire to Enlarge the Bounds of his Empire?

Ans. All Kingdoms were at first (as you have heard) limited with their own Bounds, neither were Kings so ambitious of Empire to themselves, as of Glory to their People, and if they did make War, it was not for Dominion, but for the Honour of Conquest, &c. Now unto this antient Custom it is, that Saint *Augustine* (*De Civitat. Dei. l. 4. c. 15.*) laboured as much as in him lay, to perswade us that it no ways befits an honest Prince to rejoyce in the Enlarging of his Dominions.

It was (saith that Father) the Badness of those against whom just Wars were undertaken, that hath advanced Earthly Sovereignties to that port they now hold: which would have been little still, if no Enemy had given Cause or Provocation to War, by offering his Neighbour wrong. If men had always been thus Conditioned, the Kingdoms of the Earth would have Continued little in quantity, and peaceful in Neighbourly Agreement; And then many Kingdoms would have been in the World, as many Families are now in a City, so that the Waging War, and Augmentation of Dominions by Conquest, may seem to the Bad as a great Felicity, but the Good must needs hold it a meer necessity: But, because it would be worse, if the Bad should get all the Sovereignty, and so overrule the Good; Therefore in that Respect the Honest Men may esteem their own Sovereignty a Felicity. But doubtless he is far more Happy, that hath a Good Neighbour by him in Quiet, than he who must be forced to subdue an Evil Neighbour by Contention. It is an evil Wish to wish for One that thou Hatest, or Fearest, or for one to Trouble thee, that thou might'st have one to Conquer.

Upon which account it was, that *S. Cyril* [*Lib. 5. Contr. Iulian.*] doth command the *Hebrew* Kings, who always contented themselves with their own Bounds, without Encroaching on their Neighbours; which was the very Sin for which the Prophet *Amos* did so severely reprove the *Israelites*, *Amos. l. 13. &c.*

Though what I have offered you out of *St. Augustine*, be sufficient to make good the Resolution of your third Query, yet I shall give you further

ther the Sentiments of antient *Heathens*, against such as have followed the Lust of Sovereignty, to make themselves Lords of the Whole World ; And I will begin with *Plutarch*, He brings in some making this Objection : But bath not Rome much improved her self by War ? Whereunto he answers, 'Tis true indeed she bath so, in the Opinion of those, who place their greatest Glory in Riches, in Pleasure, Wantonness, and Martial Power, (which are but the Dregs of Honour) but not in theirs, shho place their Glory in the safety of their People, in Meekness, Justice, and Contentation. It was therefore worthily said of *Stephanus* the Physician unto *Cosroes*, King of *Persia*, To thee, O King, who art wholly Conversant in Blood, and Slaughter, in Subduing Kingdoms, and Depopulating Cities, other Glorious Attributes may be due ; But surely thou canst never hope by these ways to be esteemed Good : For no good Man will greedily Covet that which is another's.

Philiscus advised *Alexander* the Great, to be Emulous of Glory, but not by making himself like unto a Plague, in Depopulating Cities, and laying whole Kingdoms Wast. As *Philiscus* advised *Alexander* ; so *Alexander* himself Wrote to *Artaxerxes* the Persian ; Every King ought to confine himself within his own Dominions, and not Encroach upon anothers ; neither should any man out of uncertain hope, Invade the Right of another, but rest Contented with his own.

I shall conclude my Answer to this your third Question with that which the Learned *Hugo Grotius* writes, touching Moderation in the Acquisition of Empire.

Nothing can more Conduce (saith he) to a lasting Peace between Neighbour Princes, than to be content to live within their own Bounds ; and backs his own Assertion with several Excellent Authorities, which here follow.

It was very well said of *Florus*, It is more difficult to keep Provinces, than to make them ; for they may be gained by Force, but they must be kept with Justice. Not much unlike is that of *Livy*, Particulars are more Easily gain'd than Universals. Nor that of *Augustus* in *Plutarch*, it is better to Govern our own well ; than to be possess of a greater Empire. Whereunto we may add that saying of *Darius's* Ambassador to *Alexander* : A Foreign Empire is full of Danger, Thou wilt find it very difficult to hold what thou canst not Grasp : Some things may be easily gain'd, yet not so easily kept. How ready are our Hands to catch at that, which when they have, they cannot hold ? which *Calanus* the Indian, and before *Oebarus*, *Cyrus's* Friend, did very well Emblem out, by a dryed Oxe's Hide, which being prest down with our Feet on the one side, riseth instantly on the other. And *Titus Quintius* in *Livy*, by a Tortoise ; who whilst he gathers himself up within his Shell is safe ; but as soon as he thrusts out any one part, he is exposed to danger. *Plutarch* thus relates, that when the *Achaians*, consulted about the taking of the Island *Zant*, he dissuading from it, told them, That it

was

was a dangerous Attempt, if like the Tortoise, they thrust their Head beyond Peloponnesus.

Thus (Sir) I have made it manifestly Evident to you, by my Answers, returned to your Queries, That it is accounted by *Heathens* as well as by *Christians*, a most horrid Villany and Dishonesty, for any one Sovereign Prince to follow the Inordinate Lust of Sovereignty: to be wholly Con- versant in Rapine, Blood and Slaughter, in Subduing Countries, and Depopulating Cities, that he may force Mankind into an *Universal Slavery*, and *Vassalage*. I have no more to offer you, but only this, That it may be your *Errand* as it is mine, namely; *From a Prince that intends to bring forth by his Powerful Armies, a Wondrous Theatre of Uncristian Glory, Planted upon a Mountainous Heap of Christian Skulls, Good Lord deliver Us.*

THE POSTSCRIPT.

Consisting of an Honourable Testimony of St. Lewis King of France; as also of St. Lewis his Honest Charge to his Son; both taken from Joinvil's History c. 89.

I. OF THE TESTIMONY.

HIS grand Councillors did often blame him, for taking so much pains in Composing the Quarrels of his Neighbour Princes, and for not rather suffering them to make War one against another, which might turn to his Advantage; but the King told them, they did not well advise him: For (said he) in case those Princes and Governors, do once perceive that I foment the War betwixt them, they will presently say, the *French* dealeth Craftily in suffering us to War one against another, thereby to promote his own Designs; Whereupon they will immediately turn all their Hatred against me, to the great Damage of my Kingdom; and haply, I shall thereby provoke God's Wrath against me, who hath pronounced a Blessing to the Peace-maker, &c.

II. OF THE CHARGE.

If any Controversie, or Suit arise against thee, search into the Truth, Whether it be for Thee, or against Thee? And if thou Possessest anything, that is thy Neighbours, which either thou, or thine Ancestors have Unjustly gotten, Restore it presently. A most Excellent Charge it is of a Christian Prince to his Son, for it is founded on true Piety, and Natural Equity; it being held as an undeniable

undeniable Maxim, not only in Divinity, but in all Humane Laws, That every Person, being Possess of another Man's Right, is Bound to make Restitution thereof to the Right Owners; As for Instance, in point of Divinity, God Almighty strictly requireth, that if any thing be unduly gotten, as either by Violence, or by Fraud and Deceit, or any other wise, Restitution be made to the true owner, *Levit. 6. v. 3, 4, 5. Numb. 5. v. 5, 7, 8.* and we have several Examples in the Holy Scriptures to Evince this Truth concerning Restitution; Before the Law, by the Example of *Jacob* and his Sons. *Gen. 43, 12, 21.* Under the Law, by the Profession of *Sammuel*, *1 Sam. 12. 4.* and the Practice of *Micha*, *Judges 17. 2.* who, tho' an Idolater, made Conscience of it. And of the *Jews*, *Nebem. 5. v. 11, 12.* Add hereunto the Civil, and Canon Laws.

This is the meaning of the Old Lawyer *Martianus*, where he tells us, that Goods may by Personal Actions at Law be required from those, who without any just Cause are Possess of them. *D. 25. 2, 3, 4, 5;* and from hence also springs that in *Ulpian*: He that finds what is anothers, is so strictly bound to restore it, that he cannot so much as require a Reward for the Finding of it, but he is bound to Restore it with its Fruits, if any be, saving only to himself his reasonable Charges. *D. 47. 2. 45. 9.*

The Canonists are strict, and Express in the Inforcement of a Just Restitution; all Acts, say they, of Repentance, prove ineffectual without it; For if, that wherein we have Sinned, be not restored, being in our Power, we do not Repent, but Dissemble. *Gratian, Causa 14. Quest. 6. c. 1.* And in another place they tell us, That so long as a Man Enjoys that which he knows not to belong to another, he may be honest; for his Ignorance is the Cause of his Detention; but being once convinced of his Error, then if he restore not, he may justly be reputed an Usurper. *Gratian Causa 24. Qu. 1. c. 2. c. 5.* The Postscript shall be closed with that saying of *Belisarius*; As for my part (quoth he) I make but little difference between him that knowingly Detains what is another Man's, and him that is a Thief, Pirate, or Robber, *Pari loco habeo, Res alienas non reddentem cum Raptore.*

F I N I S



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